

In the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of routing multimedia calls within an automatic call distributor system having a automatic call distributor coupled to the public switched telephone network and a host coupled to the Internet, such method comprising the steps of:

the host providing an Internet caller with a conversational webpage that includes a first softkey for selecting an off-line conversation and a second softkey for selecting a real-time conversation;

the host receiving an Internet call from ~~an~~ the Internet caller ~~by the host~~ through the Internet based upon activation by the Internet caller of one of the first and second softkeys;

the host requesting an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor coupled to the public switched telephone network; and

the host transferring the Internet call to a terminal of the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor.

2. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 1 further comprising queuing the request for an agent assignment.

3. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 1 wherein the step of queuing the request for an agent assignment further comprises estimating a time length of the queue.

4. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 3 wherein the step of estimating a time length of the queue further comprises transferring the estimated time to the Internet caller.

5. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 1 wherein the step of transferring the Internet call to the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor further comprises setting up a real-time Internet conference with the caller.

6. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 5 wherein the step of setting up the real-time Internet conference with the caller further comprises exchanging audio and text between the assigned agent and Internet caller through an interactive window.

7. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 5 wherein the step of setting up a real-time conference with the caller further comprises presenting an information screen to the caller about the real-time call.

8. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 5 wherein the step of presenting the information screen to the caller further comprises presenting an estimated time until an assigned agent will be available to participate in the conference.

9. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 5 wherein the step of presenting the information screen to the caller about the real-time call further

comprises presenting an information request screen to the Internet caller.

10. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 5 wherein the step of presenting the information screen to the caller further comprises presenting an animated cartoon figure for entertaining the Internet caller while the caller waits for completion of setup of the real-time conference.

11. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 1 wherein the step of requesting an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor further comprises seizing a connection on an incoming trunk to the automatic call distributor and sending simulated call associated information to the automatic call distributor.

12. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 1 wherein the step of requesting an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor further comprises sending the request over a TCP/IP connection to a call application operating within the automatic call distributor.

13. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 12 wherein the step of transferring the Internet call to the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor further comprises connecting a telephone of the assigned agent to a dummy load to avoid assigning the assigned agent to another call during the Internet call.

14. (Currently Amended) A system for routing multimedia calls within an automatic call distributor system having a automatic call distributor coupled to the public switched telephone network and a host coupled to the Internet, such apparatus comprising:

means within the host for providing an Internet caller with a conversational webpage that includes a first softkey for selecting an off-line conversation and a second softkey for selecting a real-time conversation;

means within the host for receiving an Internet call from an the Internet caller ~~by the host~~ through the Internet based upon activation of one of the first and second softkeys;

means within the host for requesting an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor; and

means within the host for transferring the Internet call to the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor.

15. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 14 further comprising means for queuing the request for an agent assignment.

16. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 14 wherein the means for queuing the request for an agent assignment further comprises means for estimating a time length of the queue.

17. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 16 wherein the means for estimating a time length of the queue further comprises means for transferring the estimated time to the Internet caller.

18. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 14 wherein the means for transferring the Internet call to the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor further comprises means for setting up a real-time Internet conference with the caller.

19. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 18 wherein the means for setting up the real-time Internet conference with the caller further comprises means for exchanging audio and text between the assigned agent and Internet caller through an interactive window.

20. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 18 wherein the means for setting up a real-time conference with the caller further comprises means for presenting an information screen to the caller about the real-time call.

21. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 18 wherein the means for presenting the information screen to the caller further comprises means for presenting an estimated time until an assigned agent will be available to participate in the conference.

22. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 18 wherein the means for presenting the

information screen to the caller about the real-time call further comprises means for requesting information from the Internet caller.

23. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 18 wherein the means for presenting the information screen to the caller further comprises means for presenting an animated cartoon figure for entertaining the Internet caller.

24. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 14 wherein the means for requesting an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor further comprises means for seizing a connection on an incoming trunk to the automatic call distributor and sending simulated call associated information to the automatic call distributor.

25. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 14 wherein the means for requesting an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor further comprises means for sending the request over a TCP/IP connection to a call application operating within the automatic call distributor.

26. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 25 wherein the means for transferring the Internet call to the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor further comprises means for connecting a telephone of the assigned agent to a dummy load.

27. (Currently Amended) A system for routing multimedia calls within an automatic call distributor system having a automatic call distributor coupled to the public switched telephone network and a host coupled to the Internet, such apparatus comprising:

a conversational webpage provided by the host to an Internet caller that includes a first softkey for selecting an off-line conversation and a second softkey for selecting a real-time conversation;

a the host adapted to receive an Internet call from an the Internet caller through the Internet based upon activation of one of the first and second softkeys;

an agent processor operating from within the host and adapted to request an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor; and

a routing processor adapted to transfer the Internet call to a terminal of the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor.

28. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 27 further comprising a queuing processor adapted to queue the request for an agent assignment.

29. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 27 wherein the routing processor further comprises an Internet conferencing protocol for setting up a real-time Internet conference with the caller.

30. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 29 wherein the conferencing protocol further comprises an interactive window adapted to exchanging audio

and text between the assigned agent and Internet caller through the Internet.

31. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 29 wherein the conferencing protocol further comprises an information screen adapted to present information to the caller about the real-time call.

32. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 29 wherein the information screen further comprises a timer adapted to provide an estimated time until an assigned agent will be available to participate in the conference.

33. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 29 wherein the information screen further comprises an information entry window adapted to request information from the Internet caller.

34. (Original) The apparatus for routing multimedia calls as in claim 29 wherein the information screen to the caller further comprises an animated cartoon figure for entertaining the Internet caller.

35. (Currently Amended) A method of routing multimedia calls within an automatic call distributor system having a automatic call distributor coupled to the public switched telephone network and a host coupled to the Internet, such method comprising the steps of:

the host providing an Internet caller with a  
conversational webpage that includes a first softkey for



selecting an off-line conversation and a second softkey for selecting a real-time conversation;

the host receiving an Internet call from an the Internet caller by the host through the Internet based upon activation by the Internet caller of one of the first and second softkeys;

requesting an agent assignment from the automatic call distributor; and

queuing the Internet call in a common call queue along with other calls received through the public switched telephone network based upon a time of arrival.

36. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 35 further comprising routing the Internet call to an assigned agent when the queued Internet call reaches a front of the queue.

37. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 35 wherein the step of routing the Internet call to an agent when the queued Internet call reaches a front of the queue further comprises sending an Internet address of the Internet caller to the assigned agent.

38. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim further comprises estimating a time period before the queued Internet call will reach a front of the queue.

39. (Original) The method of routing multimedia calls as in claim 38 wherein the step of estimating a time period before the queued Internet call will reach a front of the queue further comprises transferring the estimate to the Internet caller.

40. (Currently Amended) A method of routing multimedia calls within an automatic call distributor system having an automatic call distributor coupled to the public switched telephone network and a host coupled to the Internet, such method comprising the steps of:

the host providing an Internet caller with a conversational webpage that includes a first softkey for selecting an off-line conversation and a second softkey for selecting a real-time conversation;

the host receiving an Internet call from an the Internet caller by the host through the Internet based upon activation of one of the first and second softkeys;

requesting an agent assignment for handling the Internet call from the automatic call distributor; and

transferring the Internet call to the agent assigned by the automatic call distributor.

41. (Currently Amended) A method of displaying information to a caller of an automatic call distributor, such method comprising the steps of:

the host providing the caller with a conversational webpage that includes a first softkey for selecting an off-line conversation and a second softkey for selecting a real-time conversation;

the host receiving a request for a real-time conference from a the caller based upon activation of the second softkey;

the host sending a call request to the automatic call distributor for an agent to handle the real-time conference; and

|     the host presenting graphical information to the  
caller as the caller waits for setup of the real-time  
conference.